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THE
LION'S MASQUERADE.

A
S E Q U E L
TO THE
PEACOCK AT HOME.

WRITTEN

BY A LADY.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ELEGANT ENGRAVINGS.



LONDON:

Printed for J. HARRIS, at the Original Juvenile
Library, the Corner of St. Paul's Church Yard ;
and B. TABART, Old Bond-Street.

1807.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

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AS TO ITS AUTHORSHIP

BY

CHARLES WELSH

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FIELD & TUER, YE LEADENHALL PRESS, E.C.

MDCCCLXXXIII

INTRODUCTION.

EARLY in the present century John Harris—one of the successors to the business of “Honest John Newbery,” now carried on by Messrs Griffith & Farran at the old corner of St. Paul’s Churchyard—began the publication of a series of little books, which for many years were probably among the most famous of the productions of the House. Now, however, according to the fate which usually overtakes books for children, nearly all of them are forgotten or unknown.

The first book in this series which was known as *Harris’s Cabinet* was “The Butterfly’s Ball,” and was published in January 1807. This was followed in the same year by “The Peacock at Home” (a sequel to “The Butterfly’s Ball”), “The Elephant’s Ball,” and “The Lion’s Masquerade;” and then (prompted no doubt by the success of these, for we learn on the publisher’s authority that of the two first 40,000 copies were sold within twelve months) Mr Harris brought out a

torrent of little books of a like kind, of which the titles were : "The Lioness's Ball," "The Lobster's Voyage to the Brazils," "The Cat's Concert," "The Fishes' Grand Gala," "Madame Grimalkin's Party," "The Jackdaw's Home," "The Lion's Parliament," "The Water King's Levée;" and in 1809, by which time, naturally enough, the idea seems to have become quite threshed out and exhausted, the last of the Series was published; this was entitled, "The Three Wishes, or Think before you Speak."

Of this long list of books a few of the titles are still familiar, and one of them, "The Butterfly's Ball," may certainly claim to have become a Nursery Classic. It is still in regular demand; the edition now in sale being illustrated by Harrison Weir; it has been published in various forms, and has figured in most of the collections of prose and verse for the young that have been issued during this century. Probably to the minds of hundreds of people past middle age few lines are more familiar than the opening couplet—

"Come take up your hats, and away let us haste
To the Butterfly's Ball and Grasshopper's Feast"—

and many no doubt by a little effort of memory could repeat the whole poem.

Hardly less famous were the three books which next

followed in order of issue—"The Peacock at Home," "The Elephant's Ball," and "The Lion's Masquerade." Their original size was 5 by 4 inches, and they were issued in a simple printed paper wrapper. It is of these first four books that the reprint is here given, and in order to present both pictures and text with greater effect this reprint has been made upon considerably larger paper; the text and illustrations are fac-simile reproductions of originals from the celebrated Flaxman collection recently dispersed at a sale by Messrs Christie, Manson, & Woods, when Mr Tuer, to whom I am indebted for their loan, became their fortunate possessor. "The Butterfly's Ball" is not a reproduction of the first edition, which, as will be shown later on, would be considered by those who are familiar with the poem as incomplete. Moreover, the illustrations in the edition here presented are obviously by the same hand as that which embellished the other three books, and it was felt that for these reasons it would possess a greater interest.

"The Butterfly's Ball" first appeared in the November number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where it is said to have been written by William Roscoe—M.P. for Liverpool, the author of "The Life of Leo X.," and well known in the literary circles of his day—for the use of his children, and set to music by order of their Majesties for the Princess Mary.

When the verses were subsequently published in book form, the text and pictures were engraved together on copperplates. An edition, with pictures on separate pages, appeared early in the next year, which is the one here reproduced.

In this edition there are many variations from the previous one. The allusions to "little Robert"—evidently William Roscoe's son—do not occur in the former, and many slight improvements, tending to make the verses more rhythmical and flowing, are introduced. The whole passage, "Then close on his haunches" (p. 7) to "Chirp his own praises the rest of the night," &c. (p. 10), is an interpolation in this later edition. It is, I believe, certain that the verses were written by Roscoe for his children on the occasion of the birthday of his son Robert, who was nearly the youngest of his seven sons. No doubt when they were copied out for setting to music the allusions to his own family were omitted by the author. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries*—who is, I believe, a niece of the late Sir George Smart—says, in reference to the question of the setting of the verses to music, that—

"The MS., in Roscoe's own handwriting, as sent to Sir G. Smart for setting to music, is in a valuable collection of autographs bequeathed by the musician to his daughter. The glee was written for the three princesses—Elizabeth, Augusta, and Mary—daughters of George III. and pupils of Sir George, and was performed by them during one of their usual visits to Weymouth."

"The Peacock at Home" and "The Lion's Masquerade" were, as the title-page puts it, written "by a Lady," and we should most likely have remained in ignorance as to who the lady was if there had not been published in 1816 another little book of a somewhat similar character, entitled "The Peacock and Parrot on their Tour to discover the Author of 'The Peacock at Home,'" which, the Preface tells us, was written immediately after the appearance of "The Peacock at Home," but from various circumstances was laid aside. "In the opinion of the publishers," the Preface goes on to say, "it is so nearly allied in point of merit to that celebrated trifle that it is introduced at this late period."

The book relates in verse how the peacock and parrot—

". . . far as England extends
Then together did travel to visit their friends,
Endeavour to find out the name of our poet,
And ere we return ten to one that we know it."

After long travelling—

"A path strewed with flowers they gaily pursued,
And in fancy their long-sought Incognita viewed.
Till all their cares over in Dorset they found her,
And plucking a wreath of green bay-leaves they crowned her."

In a footnote is added, "Mrs Dorset was the authoress of 'The Peacock at Home.'"

Mrs Dorset, according to a note by Mr Dyce which appears on the fly-leaf of a copy of "The Peacock at Home," in the Dyce and Forster Collection at South Kensington, was sister to Charlotte Smith. Their maiden name was Turner.

The British Museum Catalogue says Mrs Dorset also wrote "The Three Wishes, or Think before you Speak," which is the last on the list of books in *Harris's Cabinet*. (See p. iv.)

It seems to be clear that the same lady wrote "The Lion's Masquerade" as "The Peacock at Home," for in "The Lioness's Ball" (a companion to "The Lion's Masquerade") the dedication begins thus—

" I do not, fair Dorset, I do not aspire,
With notes so unhallowed as mine,
To touch the sweet strings of thy beautiful lyre,
Or covet the praise that is thine."

I regret that I am unable to offer any conjecture here as to the "W. B." who wrote "The Elephant's Ball:" the same initials appear to an appendix to an edition of "Goody Two Shoes," published some time before 1780, but this may be a coincidence only.

Besides the interest and merit of these little books on literary grounds, these earlier editions are especially note-

worthy because they were illustrated by the painter William Mulready, and the drawings he made for them are amongst the earliest efforts of his genius : they were executed before he had reached man's estate. It is not a little curious to observe in this connection how many artists who have risen to eminence have at the outset of their career been employed in illustrating books for children ; it would indeed appear that until comparatively recent years the veriest tiro was considered capable of furnishing the necessary embellishments for books for the nursery—a state of things which, we need not say, happily does not obtain in the present day. Notwithstanding this, however, these and many other little books of a bygone time abound in instructive indications of the beginnings of genius which has subsequently delighted the world with its masterpieces.

In connection with Mulready and children's books it may be interesting to note that in 1806 a little book called "The Looking Glass" was published, said to be written by William Godwin under the name of "Theophilus Markliffe." This work is the history and early adventures of a young artist, and it is known that it was compiled from a conversation with Mulready, who was then engaged in illustrating some juvenile books for the author, and the facts in it relate to the painter's early life. It contains illustrations of the talent of the subject

done at three, five, and six years old, which are presumed to be imitations of Mulready's own drawings at the same ages.

I cannot more fitly close these few words of Introduction than by quoting the quaint and curious announcement with which Mr Harris was wont to commend these little books to the public. "It is unnecessary," says he, "for the publisher to say anything more of these little productions than that they have been purchased with avidity and read with satisfaction by persons in all ranks of life." No doubt the public of to-day will be curious to see what manner of book it was that was so eagerly sought after by the children of the early days of the present century, and interested in comparing it with the more finished but often showy and sensational productions of our own time.

C. W.

LEYTONSTONE,

September 1883.

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Field & Tuer, Ye Leadenhalle Presse, London.

Frontispiece.



"It rous'd an old Lion asleep in his Den." *Spring: 1807.*

P. 3.

Pub. Dec. 10 - 1807. by, L. Harris, corner St. Pauls Ch. Yd.

THE
LION'S MASQUERADE.

AS Aurora stepped forth from the gates of the East,
With her garland of roses, and dew-spangled vest,
A clamour unusual assaulted her ear,
Instead of the Lark, and her friend Chanticleer,
At least though their voices she sometimes could trace,
They seem'd overpower'd by the whole feather'd race :
And such was the chirping, and fluttering then,
It roused *an old Lion* asleep in his den ;

Enrag'd at this racket so much out of season,
He, roaring, sent out to ask what was the reason,
And the *Jackal* soon learnt from some stragglers about,
'Twas the company come from *Sir Argus's* rout.
The gay *feather'd people* pursuing their flight,
Were soon out of hearing, and soon out of sight.
But the *King of the Quadrupeds* vainly sought rest,
For something like envy had poison'd his breast.
What then were his feelings the following day,
When every creature he met on his way,
Could talk about nothing, both early and late,
But the Peacock's most sumptuous, and elegant fête.
His name, through the woods as he wander'd along,
Was still made the burthen of every song.

That the concert was exquisite, all were agreed,
And so were the ball, and the supper indeed,
The company too of the very first rank,
And the wit that prevail'd, and the toasts that were drank :
He found to his infinite rage and vexation,
"Twas the favourite subject half over the nation ;
And feeling no longer a relish to roam,
He return'd to his Lioness, sullenly, home.
" Fair consort of mine, 'tis our pleasure," he said,
" To give very shortly, *a grand Masquerade*.
" Tho' the Butterfly's ball, and the Grasshopper's feasts,
" Were too mean for my notice, as King of the beasts ;
" Now the Peacock has chosen to give a fine rout,
" Which is heard of so much, is so blazon'd about,

"Has excited such rapture, and warm approbation,
"As threatens the rank which we hold in creation.
"Then with diligence, love, for my banquet prepare,
"And mind all the beasts of the forest are there."

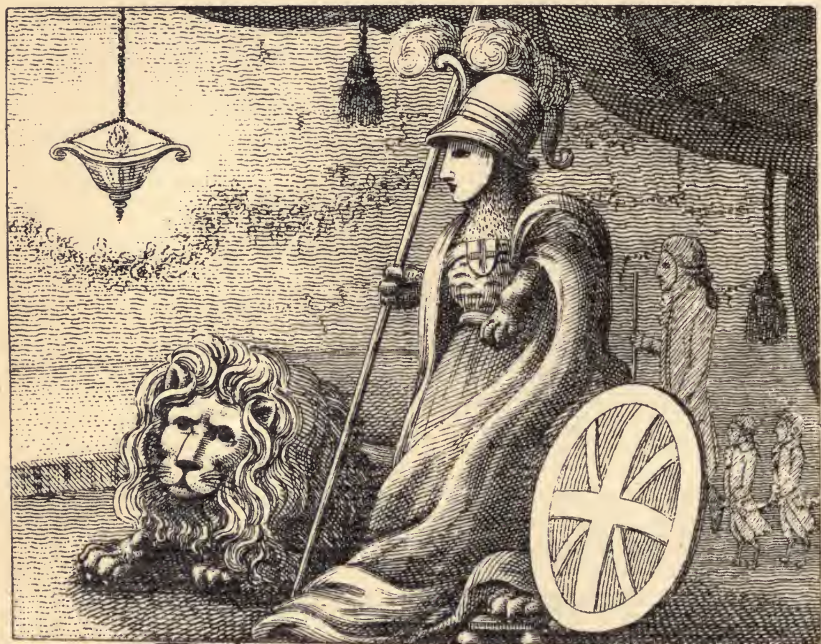
'Twas the task of the *Jackal* the tickets to pen,
"The *Lion* sees masks, on the twentieth, at ten."

It would take a whole volume distinctly to name,
The answer on answer that following came.

There were some that were sick from the changeable weather,
And some long engag'd in snug parties together.

But few, very few would refuse such a thing,
As a grand entertainment announc'd by their King.

All devoted the time now to due preparation,
To decide on their character, dress, decoration.



"The Lions willing to sanction the past."

At length Phœbus dawn'd on the long wish'd-for day
Which their beauty, their talents, and wit should display.
What licking, and cleaning, what endless adorning,
Not a creature stirr'd out the whole course of the morning ;
And some of their dresses were barely complete,
At the time they were punctually order'd to meet,
The *Lioness*, willing to sanction the rest,
With a helmet, and spear, as Britannia was drest ;
But the Lion, as lord of the banquet, remain'd
In the same noble figure that Nature ordain'd ;
And crouching beside her, with dignified mien,
Contributed much to the state of his Queen.
The *Jackal Lord Chamberlain* waited upon her,
And two little *Lap-dogs* as *Pages of Honour* :

While twelve *Orang-Outangs* were station'd without,
To usher the company in, and about.
At the hour which his King had thought proper to name,
The *Horse*, as the *Hounyhm* of Gulliver came ;
Unaccustom'd to "utter the thing that is not," *
He reach'd, at the moment he promis'd, the spot.
The *Fox* then appear'd on a different scent,
On foul depredation, and villainy bent ;
And the dress of a *country attorney* he chose,
To his purpose best suited, as all the world knows !
With looks as impatient, and teeming with sin,
The *Wolf in Sheep's-clothing* was next usher'd in.

* Vide Gulliver's Travels.



"A Lamb Miss in her teens, with her Aunt an old Mutton". p. 9.

The guests now came thronging in numbers untold,
The furious, the gentle, the young and the old.
In dominos some, but in characters most,
And now a brave warrior, and then a fair toast.
The *Baboon* as a *Counsellor*; *Alderman*, *Glutton*;
A *Lamb*, Miss *in her teens*, with her *aunt*, an *old mutton*.
It was easy to see, as this couple past by,
The *Wolf*, very knowingly, cast a *Sheep's eye*.
And now at the door was a terrible clatter,
The beasts all about wonder'd what was the matter.
A poor *Cat in pattens* came running so fast,
Her ticket was almost forgot as she past ;

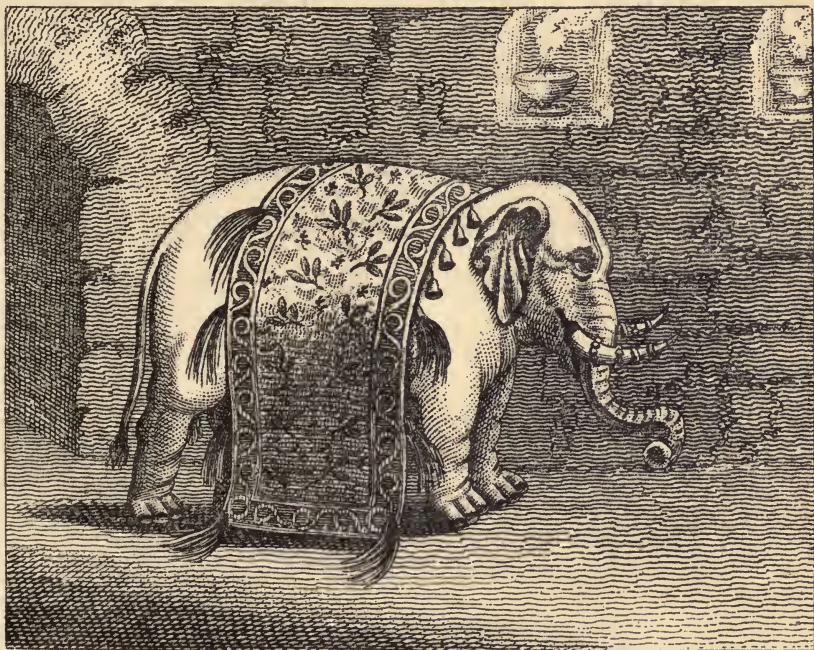
But there was, it appear'd, quite enough to alarm her,
For close at her heels came a *great Hog in armour*.
Then follow'd his friend in a very large wig
As a *deep-read professor*—the *fam'd learned Pig*—
A *Bear* came as *Caliban*, loaded with wood,
His bones full of *aches* from Prospero's rod.
The *Greyhound* as *Vanity* holding a glass,
The *Stag*, as *Actæon*; King *Midas*, the *Ass*.
And next them a sullen, and obstinate *Mule*,
As a *Dunce*, who had just been expell'd from his school.
The *Mastiff* a brave *English sailor* appear'd,
No friend he betray'd, and no enemy fear'd :



But there was it appeared, quite enough to alarm her p. 10.

Britannia receiv'd him with mark'd condescension,
And paid him all night, most distinguish'd attention,
Now skipping along on the tip of his toe,
Came a *chattering Monkey*, a Frenchifi'd beau :
And reeling behind, in an *officer's dress*,
Was his pert younger brother, just come from the mess ;
With manners as forward, and strut as complete,
As other *young Ensigns* you see in the street.
The *Bull* came as *Taurus*, all studded with stars ;
Capricornus, the *Goat* ; a *Bull-dog*, as Mars.
Now refreshments by order were handed about,
And the dancing commenc'd with a terrible rout ;

When suddenly silence pervaded the throng,
Some Eastern grandees were conducted along,
Attendants preceded with all due decorum,
And *Spaniels*, as *courtiers*, came fawning before 'em.
No longer in servitude bending the knee,
And destin'd, the first of his kind, to be free,
The *Camel* approach'd, with magnificence drest
As a *Nabob*, who lately arriv'd from the East.
From the Island of *Ceylon* an *Elephant* came.
In costume complete, as the *King of Siam* ;
Thence follow'd a *Native* of snowy white race,
Respect and affection, were mark'd in his face,



"Thence followid a Native of monny white race." p. 12

An appendage of grandeur, with chowries hung round,
And tissu'd embroidery that trail'd on the ground ;
Round his tusks precious stones, gold, and diamonds were set,
He was one splendid mass from his head to his feet.
The *Tiger*, a *fierce Indian Chief* in the rear,
Many foreigners too of distinction were there.
This magnificent group so astonished the crowd,
That some, in their rapture, applauded aloud.
Supper now was announc'd ; with a terrible crush,
To the door did the ravenous visitants rush :
For some time none could pass, but the first that were able,
Found, *Glutton the Alderman*, seated at table.

At the banquet the guests in amazement were lost,
And the *King of Siam* took the right of his host.
Beside him, a vase fill'd with water was plac'd,
Of chrystal, and gold, very skilfully chac'd :
With flow'rs of the orange the handles were bound,
And Otto of Roses was sprinkled around—
Before him were cocoa nuts, figs, wheat, and rice,
The wood of acacia, banana, and spice :
With arrack, and every delicate wine,
That each nation can press from the clustering vine.
To proceed were but tedious ; for every *beast*,
As well as the *Elephant*, found a rich feast.



"At the Banquet the guests in amazement were lost." p. 24

And now their *great Monarch*, who quitted his seat,
With an air of true majesty said, "I entreat,
" As he fears my displeasure, that every *creature*,
" Will to-night lay aside all that's bad in his nature.
" You have heard with what harmony *Birds* can retire,
" And their conduct in this respect all must admire.
" In the *feather'd race* here an example we find,
" Far better than that which is set by *Mankind*.
" How oft have their gala's a tragical end,
" One loses a mistress, another a friend—
" The wife of a third has elop'd from a ball,
" A fourth the next day in a duel must fall.

" Yes ! such are the fatal effects of excess,

" Which *reason* was given to *man* to repress.

" But now let us tell them, with pride, in their *feasts*,

" To copy the *Insects*, the *Birds*, and the *Beasts*."

The effect of his speech was immediately seen,

They all roar'd "*Rule Britannia* " in praise of his Queen,

And as soon as their *Monarch* had quitted the room,

Without growl, grunt, or grumble, they all scrambled home.

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